muzak

The Positive Impact of Music in a Business Environment

If you've ever wondered about the results you may get by investing in music for your customer and employee environment, consider some of these findings. Research demonstrates the positive impact music can have in a business environment, in the following areas. Please note: any use of this information in should cite the original source.

STRESS REDUCTION

Studies have shown that music can promote a less stressful and more enjoyable customer experience. People who are exposed to music experience reduced blood pressure, score higher on emotional wellness tests and experience reduced levels of anxiety and lower levels of stress.

BRAND PERCEPTION

At least one study showed a positive correlation between the characteristics of the music used in a business location and the customer ratings of that business. For example, the more that customers perceived the music as being optimistic, the more the business was perceived this way.

BRAND LOYALTY

The cost of keeping existing customers happy is significantly lower than to acquire new customers. Using music to reinforce a positive experience can lead to increased loyalty to a brand.

ENVIRONMENT

Many studies exist to show the impact of store environment and atmosphere in relation to perception of customer service and satisfaction. The studies linked below show the connection between music and customer feelings about their environment.

SALES

Empirical evidence exists which shows the link between music in retail environments and increased sales, in both planned and impulse purchasing behaviors.

EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY

The benefits of music extend beyond the customers. Increased employee satisfaction and productivity can have a significant financial impact for business locations, as well in result in increased customer satisfaction.

muzak

Research Results

STRESS REDUCTION

Studies used:

- "Music Therapy Results for ICU Patients" – P. Updike
- "Effects of Music Treatment on Salivary Cortisol in Patients Exposed to Pre-surgical stress", Miluk-Kolosa, B., Obminski, S., Stupnicki, R., and Golec, L.
- "Schweizerische Medizinische Wochenschrift", Escher, J., Hohmann, U., Anthenien, L., Dayer, E., Bosshard, C., and Gaillard, R.C.

Findings:

Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing reports that intensive care patients who listen to music reduce their blood pressure and score higher on emotional wellness tests. (See Footnote 1)

A study measured cortisol levels in patients in conjunction with informing them that they would undergo surgery the following day. The patients who listened to music experienced reduced levels of anxiety. (See Footnote 2)

A research team selected a group of patients undergoing gastroscopy. The patients listened to the type of music they preferred during the procedure. Because of the music, the patients exhibited significantly lower levels of stress hormone. (See Footnote 3)

BRAND PERCEPTION

Study used:

- "The Effects of Music on Atmosphere in a Bank and a Bar", North, A., Hargreaves, D. and McKendrick, J.

Findings:

In 2000, a study was done to determine the effects of music on atmosphere in a bank. Results showed a positive correlation between the characteristics of the music and the customer ratings of the bank. For example, the more that customers perceived the music as being optimistic, the more the bank was perceived this way. In addition, the bank was perceived as less dynamic/upbeat when no music was played. (See Footnote 4)

BRAND LOYALTY

Study used:

- "The Effects of Background Music on Consumers' Desire to Affiliate in Buyer-Seller Interactions" Dube, L., Chebat, JC., Morin, S.

Findings:

Pleasant music, by contrast to unpleasant music, is associated with increased consumer desire to affiliate with the service provider. (See Footnote 5)

ENVIRONMENT

Studies used:

- "The Effects of Temperature, Music, and Density on the Perception of Crowding and Shopping Behavior in a Retail Environment", Timmerman, J.E.
- "The Impact of Music on Consumers' Reactions to Waiting for Services", Hui, M., Dube, L., Chebat, JC.

Findings:

People feel less crowded in shopping situations when background music is present. (See Footnote 6)

In a study exploring the impact of musical valence (degree of attractiveness and enjoyability of music to its listener) in a banking environment, the group with positively valenced music reported the most positive perceived servicescape, the least negative emotional state during waiting times, and the most positive service evaluation. (See Footnote 7)

SALES

Studies used:

- "Using Background Music to Affect the Behavior of Supermarket Shoppers", Milliman, R.E. "Business Music: a merchandising tool for the retail industry" Muzak LLC
- "Congruency of scent and music as a driver of in-store evaluations and behavior" Matilla, A. and Wirtz, J.

Findings:

R.E. Milliman studied the effectiveness of music in a national chain of supermarkets and discovered that the use of slow music increased sales more than the use of fast music. The length of shopper stay expanded, and more items were purchased ranging in increased sales from $12,112.35 per store to $16,740.23 (an increase of 39.2%) (See Footnote 8)

In a 1991 study commissioned by Muzak, it was reported that sales to shoppers under age 25 increased 51%, age 26-50 increased 11%, and over age 50 increased by 26% when music was present. (See Footnote 9)

The addition of low arousal music in a retail environment results in an 18.9% increase in impulse purchases. (See Footnote 10)

EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY

Studies used:

- "Have You Tried Working to Music?" article, Readers Digest, Antrim, D.
- "Effects of Background Music on Anxiety, Satisfaction with Communication, and Productivity", Blood, D.J. and Feriss, S.J.
- "Musical Tempo, Productivity and Morale", North,A and Hargreaves, D.

Findings:

"The Muzak Corporation, which has its wired service in hundreds of business offices, sent a special questionnaire to workers and found that only 1.6% felt that music interferes with work. In contrast, 60% report less fatigue, and 83% found their work more enjoyable. Researchers

have discovered that tonal stimuli sharpen perception. In clinics at Dartmouth and other colleges, it has been found that reading and comprehension are speeded with music. In an experiment at De Pauw University, waltzes stepped up the speed and accuracy of students doing arithmetic problems." (See Footnote 11)

Research shows that people find their conversations more satisfying when music is playing in the background, increasing their productivity while lowering their anxiety levels. (See Footnote 12)

A study performed within a British high street bank demonstrates that repetitive, mundane or undemanding tasks will generate a better level of performance if engaging music is played to the works. Results showed that workers in the check clearing department were able to clear 22.3% more checks than they did with no/very slow music. (See Footnote 13)

FOOTNOTES

1. Updike, P. "Music Therapy Results for ICU Patients", Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing, 9 (1990), 39-45
2. Miluk-Kolosa, B., Obminski, S., Stupnicki, R., and Golec, L., "Effects of Music Treatment on Salivary Cortisol in Patients Exposed to Pre-surgical stress", Experimental and Clinical Endocrinology, 102 (1994): 118-120
3. Escher, J., Hohmann, U., Anthenien, L., Dayer, E., Bosshard, C., and Gaillard, R.C., "Schweizerische Medizinische Wochenschrift", Journal Suisse de Medecine, 6 (1998): 717-33
4. North, A., Hargreaves, D. and McKendrick, J., "The Effects of Music on Atmosphere in a Bank and a Bar", Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 30 (2000), 7: 1504-1522
5. Dube, L., Chebat, JC., Morin, S., "The Effects of Background Music on Consumers' Desire to Affiliate in Buyer-Seller Interactions" Psychology and Marketing, 12 (1995), 305-319
6. Timmerman, J.E. "The Effects of Temperature, Music, and Density on the Perception of Crowding and Shopping Behavior in a Retail Environment", DAI, 42-03A (1981): 11293
7. Hui, M., Dube, L., Chebat, JC., "The Impact of Music on Consumers' Reactions to Waiting for Services", Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Library
8. Milliman, R.E. "Using Background Music to Affect the Behavior of Supermarket Shoppers", Journal of Marketing, 46 (1982): 86-92.
9. "Business Music: a merchandising tool for the retail industry" Muzak LLC (1991)
10. Matilla, A. and Wirtz, Jochen, "Congruency of scent and music as a driver of in-store evaluations and behavior" Journal of Retailing, 77 (2001), 273-289
11. Antrim, Doron K. "Have You Tried Working to Music?" Readers Digest (1946)
12. Blood, D.J. and Ferriss, S.J. "Effects of Background Music on Anxiety, Satisfaction with Communication, and Productivity", Psychological Reports, 72/1 (1993), 171-77
13. North, A.C. and Hargreaves, D.J. "Musical Tempo, Productivity & Morale", unpublished manuscript, (1999)